

The Orphans' Friend.

VOLUME II.

OXFORD, N. C., WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 1876.

NUMBER 1.

Written for the Orphans' Friend.
BEN HADAD'S BABIES.

CHAPTER II.

ON MATRIMONY.

Mr. Hadad and Miss Dill were sitting in the shade of a fruit-tree talking over the now serious aspect of their once joyful future. He said, "Let us boldly cross the Rubicon and bravely face our fate. Land and negroes, father and mother, I forsake them all for you. The way may be dark before us; but loving each other we can be happy even in poverty and adversity." Now Dora loved Ben Hadad, and had learned to cherish motherly feelings towards Mrs. Smith. She had even expected to call her "mother," at some day yet in the future. She had keenly felt her poverty, had often seen herself slighted on account of it, had been forced to move very far in the rear of the fashions, and had longed for the day when, as Mrs. Smith, the younger, she could gratify her taste for dress and return some of the slights to which she had so gracefully seemed to submit. To marry Mr. Smith was a golden opportunity. To marry Ben Hadad only, was to blast some of her most fondly cherished hopes, and to pull down all the air-castles which her anticipating imagination had been so diligently building. She could not reject her only lover who had thrown away all but her: but she could not make up her mind to a sudden surrender of all her expected wealth. She begged for time to confer with her parents, and requested Mr. Hadad to go and ask the advice of the minister. Dora's mother advised delay, hoping that time and reflection would mitigate the wrath of Mr. Smith, and that after a few months a reluctant consent might possibly be secured. Mr. Dill was sure that Mr. Smith would grow stronger in his convictions and feelings, and he therefore advised the dissolution of the engagement, and a quiet waiting for the guidance of Providence. He also thought a poor man with a good trade would make his daughter a more desirable husband than a mere collegion, with lazy habits and no profession. A man too proud to work for a living, while destitute of the means of living, could not make a very acceptable son-in-law. He also feared that the transfer of one daughter to "high life" would excite the ambition of his younger daughters, and make them refuse eligible offers among their equals. Mr. Dill in fact had always doubted the propriety of the match, and now he deliberately opposed it, and commanded his daughter not to offend Mr. Smith on whom his whole family was dependent for a living.

Mr. Hadad sought the advice of the minister, the Rev. Dr. Syntax, who, after hearing the case in full, presented a Bible view of the subject. He thus began: "My son, let us inquire of the Lord concerning this matter. Now God has expressly commanded thee to 'honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which

the Lord thy God giveth thee." Will you dishonor your father, your mother, and your God, by a hasty, not to say imprudent marriage? It is generally dangerous to disobey your parents; but always unwise and ruinous to disobey God. It is your duty to submit even when your parents are mistaken. Your duty is to suffer wrong rather than be guilty of wrong. Solomon was remarkable for his sound and sensible views on many subjects. Hear him: 'My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother. Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck.' Will you now prefer a blind cupid to the wisdom of inspiration? Solomon says again: 'A prudent wife is from the Lord.' My advice is that you return to your parents with me, and let us kneel together before the Lord and ask him to give you a prudent wife. No man ever found a better wife than the patriarch Isaac; yet he did not choose her for himself; his father followed the advice of the Lord and found her for his son. Will you madly prefer to follow the example of Samson who disregarded the advice of his parents and married a woman because when he had talked with her she pleased him well? Then he was forced to follow the fashion and to give a feast, before the end of which he found himself a bankrupt gambler, ready to murder thirty innocent men in order to redeem his pledge. Samson went on from bad to worse, till having lost the strength which gave him his glory, and those eyes which gave him pleasure in gazing at beauty, he was forced to grind in the mill of repentance, and was glad to die in the ruins which his own hands had wrought. You are standing on the edge of a precipice. Step back and you will be safe; step forward and your course will be downward."

Dr. Syntax ceased. It was evident that his words had deeply impressed his youthful hearer. Ben Hadad spent the night with the minister; but he dreamed of Dora—thought he saw her deserted and weeping. He awoke in anguish. He thought of suicide, and, though brave among his fellowmen, he was not willing to appear before his Judge with so dark a stain upon his soul. He would go and talk again with Dora. A little boy came to the door and informed Mr. Hadad that sister was sick and could not see him to-day. He returned to the hospitable roof of Dr. Syntax, and made daily calls to the blacksmith's cottage, and was as often turned away with the same announcement. He found also that the children were forbidden to pass any papers between them. After several plans had failed, he wrote with a piece of chalk on the foxy shoe of the little boy, and Dora read as follows: "F. O. T. to-morrow."

On the next day Dora rose early, assisted her mother in the household duties, and gave signs of cheerful submission to her fate. That evening she went with one of her brothers to a temperance meeting. Mr. Hadad was also a

member and prompt in his attendance. A famous orator was present, and delivered a cold-water oration, breaking a beautiful goblet in order to illustrate how all that tempts us to evil should be dashed away from the lips. The neighbors were posted on current events, and every eye observed Mr. Hadad's movements. He politely bowed to Dora, and not a word was spoken between them; but he had contrived to have a letter placed in her pocket without the knowledge of her watchful brother. In that letter he proposed an elopement. On the next Sunday evening the sexton displayed unusual activity in putting out the lights as soon as the services ended, and the people hurried out in haste and some confusion. Soon Dora was called and no answer returned. Dr. Syntax called for Mr. Hadad, but called in vain. The excitement was intense. Curiosity stood on tip-toe. Ben and Dora had disappeared, but nothing more was known.

(CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.)

For the Orphans' Friend.

DEAR CHILDREN:—Christmas with its festive scenes has again passed and soon the year 1875 will be no more. I propose to offer a prize for next Christmas Eve, like little Tommie Horner enjoyed, when on Christmas eve, "he sat in the corner, put in his thumb, pulled out a plum and said what a great boy am I." It is offered to the most truthful, honest and obedient boy in Oxford Orphan Asylum during the year 1876; and an useful book to the most tidy, truthful and obedient girl. Do not think the time is too long, it will soon pass away. It seems but yesterday when you were enjoying the many good things sent to the Asylum by kind friends in Petersburg; and benevolent hearts in Norfolk, her sister city, now gladden your hearts again with a liberal gift this feast of the year, in which rich and poor rejoice over the birth of the Prince of Peace. Do you think you ought to be so kindly cared for every year if unwilling to contend for the prize? I do not think it is right to spend money or waste time on those who will not strive to be honest, truthful and obedient, therefore I want to impress the great necessity of these traits on your youthful minds. First you must obey God and keep His commandments. If you rejoice over the Sabbath, you must make an effort to keep it Holy. That one day out of seven belongs to God and you have no right to steal the time given for your spiritual improvement, to devote to worldly amusements. If you indulge in games, marbles or anything that draws your thoughts from heavenly things you cannot be honest, for you are stealing time that does not belong to you, and breaking a commandment. Little children are apt to think they are not to work for heaven until maturer age. It is a false delusion. The day you know right from wrong, you are old enough; and pursuing the right, you gain one step towards the salvation of your souls. Temptations are placed in chil-

dren's path by the evil one as well as with older persons; they are never too young for his poisonous fangs to enter their tender hearts, and plant seeds of corruption to bring forth fruits of his liking, not any greater than lying and cheating. They go hand in hand, the boy can practice it in a game of marbles, and the girl in selling a thimble, dishonoring their teachers, for they disobey their instructions. The prize are of no great value, but you will learn a lesson by striving for it. The one great prize is won by strictly conforming to truth, honesty, and obedience. Truth is the word of God, and if we honestly obey the precepts therein contained we will be apt to gain the prize of high calling in Him. The Prince of Peace whose birthday we have just celebrated.

Think of this great prize dear children, and report honestly to your teachers every Friday evening, and next Christmas Eve let them be read out in the chapel. If you know you have deceived during the week, confess it truthfully, and ask your teachers to help you, while you pray for strength to overcome the bad habit. Perfection is not expected, but by watchful care over your infirmities and constantly practising truth and honest dealing with those in authority over you; you may be able to resist the evil one, making your hearts so pure within that it will be but a light work to gain the great prize held out to all the followers of the cross, the believers in our Emmanuel, the Prince of Peace.

S. A. E.

JANUARY.

In old Roman mythology *Janus* was a royal doorkeeper, an appropriate name for such a personage, inasmuch as the Latin word *janua*, from which *Janus* is derived, means a door.—When Numa Pompilius, whose reign closed about six hundred and seventy-two years B. C. (Before Christ), took it into his royal head to make a new 'time table' for the world, he upset things generally. The ancient Jewish, Egyptian, Greek calendars began the year on the 25th of March, and this system ran far onward into the Christian centuries. But Numa Pompilius placed two new months before the previous ten, and called the first *January*, in honor of *Janus*, and very appropriately, for, as the old mythological deity was a door-opener, so January opens the year. This *Janus*, by the way, had two faces (and the two-faced people of these days show that the race is not extinct.)—one looking forward and one backward, into the future and into the past. Occasionally he was represented with four faces, and thus he had the double name *Janus Bifrons* (two-faced) and *Janus Quadrifrons* (four-faced).

The Romans worshipped *Janus* as the guardian of the year and the seasons, of gates and doors, and at the beginning of the day the people prayed to him, and at the beginning of the year sacrifices were offered to him on twelve altars, one for each month.

The first day of January has for many centuries been celebrated by feasting and rejoicings, and the custom of making presents dates back so far into the dim past that we cannot trace its origin. Early Latin authors mention it, and it was practised to great excess in the far-off years of English and French history. The fashion was, in those days, to give such articles as were rare, and we read of presents of 'glove-money,' or gloves, when gloves were expensive.—About the beginning of the sixteenth century metallic pins were invented, doubtless to the great joy and convenience of the ladies, and these useful little articles were often given as New Year's presents, or money with which to purchase pins, and so 'pin-money' became a common gift. In process of time the phrase came to mean any money to be expended for trifles. Before the sixteenth century pins for fastening clothes were made of box-wood, bone, and silver for the rich, while wooden 'skewers' served the limited wants of the poor. We now associate 'skewers' with the kitchen and roast meats. It has always been, and always will be, an unanswered question, 'What becoms of all the pins?'—*Christian Advocate*.

MODERN ISCARIOTS.

We do great injustice to Iscariot in thinking him wicked above all wickedness. He is only a common money-lover; did not understand Christ; could not make out the worth of him. He did not want him to be killed. He was horror struck when he found that Christ would be killed; threw his money away instantly and hanged himself. How many of our present money-seekers, think you, would have the grace to hang themselves whenever they killed? But Judas was a common, selfish muddle-headed fellow; his hand always in the bag of the poor, not caring for them.—He didn't understand Christ; yet he believed in him much more than most of us do; had seen him do miracles, thought he was strong enough to shift for himself, and he might as well make his own by perquisites out of the affair. Christ would come out of it well enough and he have thirty pieces.

Now, that is the money-lover's idea, all over the world. He does not hate Christ, but he can't understand him; he does not care for him—sees no good in that benevolent business, but takes his own "little job" of it at all events, come what may. And thus out of every class of men you have a certain amount of bagmen—men whose main object in life is to make money; and they do make it in all sorts of unfair ways, chiefly by the weight and force of money itself, or what is called capital; that is to say the power which money once obtained, has over the labors of the poor, so that the capitalist can take all the produce to himself except the laborers' feed. That is the modern Judas' way of "carrying the bag" and "bearing what is put therein."